WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A game progress administering system in which game terminal units to be operated by players are operated while being so connected via communication lines as to be able to communicate operation signals necessary for the progress of a game, thereby administering the progresses of competition games in a tournament made up of a plurality of rounds, comprising:

participation receiving means for receiving the participation in the competition game from the game terminal units,

combination generating means for fitting participating terminal units, which are game terminal units whose participation was received by the participation receiving means, in combinations of the competition game tournament in accordance with a specified rule,

competition starting means for allotting one game space to one combination in accordance with the combinations generated by the combination generating means and instructing the participating terminal units to start the competition games in the respective rounds, and

competition ending means for instructing the participating terminal units to end competitions in the respective rounds in accordance with time limits for competition times set beforehand for the respective rounds at least up to the semifinal round and determining winning participating terminal units in accordance

with the dominance in the progress statuses of the competition games when the competitions were ended.

2.   A game progress administering system according to claim 1, further comprising participating terminal number counting means for counting a participating terminal number, which is the number of the participating terminal units, by counting up the participating terminal number every time the participation in the competition game is received by the participation receiving means and by resetting the participating terminal number to 0 if the participating terminal number has coincided with a maximum participating terminal number, which is the total number of the game terminal units constituting the competition game tournament or if a predetermined time has lapsed after a timing at which the participating terminal number was changed from 0 to 1, wherein:

the competition starting means instructs the participating terminal units to start the competition games at a timing when the participating terminal number is reset by the participating terminal number counting means, and

the combination generating means fits the participating terminal units in the combinations of the competition game tournament again after a timing at which the participating terminal number is reset by the participating terminal number counting means.

3.   A game progress administering system according to

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claim 2, further comprising combination interval setting means for setting the predetermined time in accordance with date and hour.

4. A game progress administering system according to claim 2 or 3, wherein the combination generating means allots the game terminal units to be virtually operated by CPU players as lacking game terminal units if the participating terminal number falls short of the maximum participating terminal number upon the lapse of the predetermined time.

5. A game progress administering system according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the combination generating means fits the participating terminal units in the combinations of the competition game tournament so that the numbers of the participating terminal units fitted in the respective combinations of the competition game tournament substantially coincide with each other.

6. A game progress administering system according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the competition ending means instructs the participating terminal units to end the competition at a point of time when the progress status of the competition game becomes a predetermined status when no time limit is set for the final round.

7. A game progress administering system according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein:

the competition game is the one played by three or a

specified larger number of competitors,

the game progress administering system further comprises winner number setting means for setting the number of winners in one combination made up of the specified number of competitors for each round, and

the competition ending means determines the number of winners set by the winner number setting means.

8.   A game progress administering system according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein:

the competition game is a game simulating mahjong having a plurality of winds, and

the game progress administering system further comprises proceeding means for proceeding with the competition game in accordance with a tile discarding time that is a preset limit time from the draw of a tile to the discard of a tile.

9.   A game progress administering system according to claim 8, further comprising:

rank storage means for storing ranks of the players representing strengths of the players based on past competition results in correspondence with identification information of the players, and

discarding-time storage means for storing the tile discarding time for each rank,

wherein the participation receiving means receives the identification information of the players and reads the ranks

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corresponding to the received identification information of the players from the rank storage means, and the proceeding means reads the tile discarding time corresponding to the rank read by the participation receiving means from the discarding-time storage means, and conducts the competition game in accordance with the read tile discarding time.

10. A game progress administering system according to claim 9, wherein the higher the rank, the shorter the tile discarding time to be set in the discarding-time storage means.

11. A game progress administering system according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the proceeding means receives operation information to the effect of extending the tile discarding time from one participating terminal unit only a specified number of times for each round, and extends the tile discarding time only by a specified time if receiving the operation information to the effect of extending the tile discarding time from the participating terminal unit.

12. A game progress administering method using a game progress administering system in which game terminal units to be operated by players are operated while being so connected via communication lines as to be able to communicate operation signals necessary for the progress of a game, thereby administering the progresses of competition games in a tournament made up of a plurality of rounds, the game progress administering method causing the game progress administering

method to perform:

participation receiving process for receiving the participation in the competition game from the game terminal units,

combination generating process for fitting participating terminal units, which are game terminal units whose participation was received in the participation receiving process, in combinations of the competition game tournament in accordance with a specified rule,

competition starting process for allotting one game space to one combination in accordance with the combinations generated in the combination generating process and instructing the participating terminal units to start the competition games in the respective rounds, and

competition ending process for instructing the participating terminal units to end competitions in the respective rounds in accordance with time limits for competition times set beforehand for the respective rounds at least up to the semifinal round and determining winning participating terminal units in accordance with the dominance in the progress statuses of the competition games when the competitions were ended.

13. A computer-readable recording medium storing a game progress administering program for a game progress administering system in which game terminal units to be operated by players

are operated while being so connected via communication lines as to be able to communicate operation signals necessary for the progress of a game, thereby administering the progresses of competition games in a tournament made up of a plurality of rounds, the game progress administering program causing the game progress administering system to function as:

participation receiving means for receiving the participation in the competition game from the game terminal units,

combination generating means for fitting participating terminal units, which are game terminal units whose participation was received by the participation receiving means, in combinations of the competition game tournament in accordance with a specified rule,

competition starting means for allotting one game space to one combination in accordance with the combinations generated by the combination generating means and instructing the participating terminal units to start the competition games in the respective rounds, and

competition ending means for instructing the participating terminal units to end competitions in the respective rounds in accordance with time limits for competition times set beforehand for the respective rounds at least up to the semifinal round and determining winning participating terminal units in accordance with the dominance in the progress statuses of the competition

games when the competitions were ended.